

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00
SAJ-01 NSC-05 EURE-00 /065 W
-----292139Z 024720 /71

P R 292143Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8348
INFO USCINCEUR PRIORITY
CINCUSNAVEUR PRIORITY
CINCUSAREUR PRIORITY
CINCUSAFE PRIORITY
COMSIXTHFLT PRIORITY
DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
USNMR SHAPE PRIORITY
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, PFOR, FR
SUBJ: FRENCH-U.S. BILATERAL EXERCISES CY '77

REF: USDAO PARIS 37900 DTG 232028Z DEC '76 NOTAL

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. EMBOFFS RAISED INFORMALLY WITH
QUAI APPARENT DIMINUTION IN BILATERAL MILITARY COOPERA-
TION IMPLIED BY FRENCH JOINT STAFF RESPONSE REPORTED
REF MESSAGE. INITIAL QUAI REACTION WAS THAT WORKING
LEVELS (THOSE INVOLVED) HAD ADDRESSED VARIOUS ITEMS
INVOLVED ON PIECEMEAL BASIS AND NOT JUDGED OVERALL
IMPACT OF FRENCH RESPONSE TO US PROPOSALS. WHILE QUAI
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OFFICIALS MADE OR IMPLIED NO REPEAT NO COMMITMENT TO
ATTEMPT TO REVISE JOINT STAFF RESPONSE, THEY SAID THEY
WOULD REVIEW MATTER WITHIN QUAI AND WITH MOD AND
JOINT STAFF. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING DECEMBER 28 CALL ON YVES BOULLET, (COUNSELOR

FOR BILATERAL DEFENSE ISSUES, OFFICE OF PACTS AND DISARMAMENT, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS) EMB POL-MIL OFFICER QUERIED AS TO WHETHER QUAI HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN FRENCH JOINT STAFF RESPONSE (REF MESSAGE). BOULLET RESPONDED THAT HE HAD REPRESENTED QUAI AT INTER-AGENCY MEETINGS TO CONSIDER US PROPOSALS TOGETHER WITH SIMILAR PROPOSALS FROM UK AND FRG. BOULLET HAD NOT SEEN FINAL JOINT STAFF RESPONSE TO USDAO. EMBOFF THEN REVIEWED AND LEFT COPY WITH BOULLET. FOLLOWING POINTS EMERGED DURING REVIEW.

3. RE SUIPPES AND CAPTIEUX AIR-TO-GROUND PRACTICE RANGES EMBOFF POINTED OUT TOTAL CUTOFF MIGHT HAVE SERIOUS EFFECT ON USAF AIRCRAFT STATIONED IN EUROPE. WHILE WE COULD APPRECIATE GOF WOULD ACCORD FIRST PRIORITY TO ITS OWN AIRCRAFT, WOULD THE RANGES INDEED BE COMPLETELY SATURATED? BOULLET RESPONDED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW. HE ADDED THAT GOF HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS WITH UK AND FRG ON QUESTION OF LIABILITY ARISING FROM POTENTIAL ACCIDENTS AT RANGES, BUT NOTED THAT THERE ARE NO DIFFERENCES WITH US ON THIS SCORE. EMBOFF STATED THAT IF DENIAL OF RANGES TO UK AND FRG WAS EFFORT TO PUT PRESSURE ON THEM, IT WAS UNCLEAR AS TO WHY US SHOULD ALSO BE DENIED. BOULLET THEN ASKED IF FRENCH AF USED ANY US RANGES? EMBOFF REPLIED AFFIRMATIVELY THAT FRENCH DID INDEED USE RAMSTEIN RANGE IN FRG. EMBOFF STATED THAT THERE WAS THUS AN ELEMENT OF RECIPROCITY INVOLVED. BOULLET CAREFULLY WROTE THIS DOWN.

4. RE USMC ONE WEEK TRAINING AT CONJUEURS, EMBOFF
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POINTED OUT US REQUESTED ONLY ONE WEEK IN JUNE OUT OF THE YEAR. JOINT STAFF REPLY WAS THAT CAMP WAS SATURATED. BOULLET TOOK THE POINT AND SAID THAT ONE COULD ASK IF THERE WAS NOT ONE WEEK PERHAPS NOT IN JUNE, WHEN CAMP MIGHT BE AVAILABLE.

5. RE SPECIAL WARFARE TRAINING, EMBOFF POINTED OUT THAT OUR TWO REQUESTS INVOLVED ONLY TEN TO TWELVE MEN ON EACH OCCASION. JOINT STAFF RESPONSE THAT "US AND FRENCH UNITS DO NOT HAVE SAME MISSION" IS PUZZLING, AS SIMILAR BILATERAL TRAINING HAS OCCURRED IN PAST AND NO QUESTIONS WERE RAISED CONCERNING SIMILARITY OF MISSIONS. BOULLET AGREED THAT THIS WAS PUZZLING AND SAID HE WAS UNAWARE OF ANY CHANGE IN MISSION OF FRENCH UNITS.

6. RE LAFAYETTE 3-77 AND 1-78, EMBOFF POINTED OUT JOINT STAFF APPROVED ONE (LAFAYETTE 2-78) AND REJECTED THE

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OTHER TWO WITH STATEMENT THAT FRENCH AIR FORCE DID NOT
FAVORABLY CONSIDER THEM. BOULLET OBSERVED THIS WAS
"LACONIC" AND DID NOT KNOW REASON WHY THESE TWO
AIR/NAVAL EXERCISES HAD BEEN REJECTED.

7. IN CONCLUSION, SPEAKING PERSONALLY, BOULLET
EMPHASIZED THAT THERE WAS NO POLITICAL MOTIVATION FOR
WHAT HE ADMITTED APPEARED TO BE A DECREASE IN US-FRENCH
MILITARY COOPERATION. HE SAID THAT EACH OF THE ABOVE
AND NUMEROUS OTHER PROPOSALS HAD BEEN REVIEWED IN
ISOLATION AND THAT HE DOUBTED IF ANYONE HAD LOOKED AT
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THE IMPLICATIONS ON THE WHOLE OF THE JOINT STAFF RESPONSE. HE CONTINUED THAT THE FRENCH DID NOT WANT TO CONVEY THE WRONG SIGNAL ON THE EVE OF THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW US ADMINISTRATION. HE COULD PROMISE NO REVISION, BUT SAID THAT HE WOULD INITIATE A REVIEW OF THE JOINT STAFF RESPONSE WITH THE QUAI AND WITH THE MOD AND JOINT STAFF.

8. AS ADDITIONAL REINFORCEMENT, WE BROUGHT THIS MATTER TO THE ATTENTION OF PATRICK HENAULT, DIRECTOR FOR AMERICAN AFFAIRS AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ON DECEMBER 29. HENAULT SAID HE WAS AWARE OF OUR CONCERN, AND WISHED TO EMPHASIZE THE ABSENCE OF ANY POLITICAL CONSIDERATION IN THE DECISIONS REACHED AT TECHNICAL LEVELS. HE ADDED THAT THE FRENCH MILITARY WILL BE INCREASING THE VOLUME OF TRAINING IN 1977 WHICH PROBABLY ACCOUNTS FOR THE PRESSURE ON AVAILABLE TIME AT THE VARIOUS FACILITIES. HENAULT SAID HIS OFFICE WOULD SUPPORT EFFORTS TO REVIEW THE DECISION TO DETERMINE IF THE GOF CAN BE MORE FORTHCOMING.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, MILITARY EXERCISES, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976PARIS38281
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760475-0559
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976127/aaaaafiu.tel
Line Count: 192
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 MAR 2004 by morefirh>; APPROVED <16 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRENCH-U.S. BILATERAL EXERCISES CY '77
TAGS: MPOL, PFOR, FR, US, (BOULLET, YVES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006